FIVE

WEAPONS

MATURE CONTENT

Andrea: Unhappy the land
that has no heroes.
Galileo: No, unhappy the land
that needs heroes.
LEBEN DES GALILEI, sc. 13
Bertolt Brecht, 1898-1956

SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
17 NOVEMBER 1997
4:56 A.M.
A CONNECTICUT FIRM HAS REFUSED TO STOP SELLING ITS NEW LINE OF CANDIES PACKAGED TO RESEMBLE VIALS OF CRACK-COCAINE, DESPITE PROTESTS FROM PARENTS' GROUPS AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

THE AXIOM BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:09 A.M.

I'M DECODING SOME MEMOS FROM GENERAL BLAGG'S OFFICE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE... RECEIVED FROM A WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT CONTRACTOR... THIS CONTRACTOR HAS BETTER ENCRYPTION-CODES THAN THE MILITARY...

WOULD IT DO ANY GOOD IF I ASKED YOU TO HURRY?

NO.

THE PENTAGON
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:12 A.M.

IS IT TRUE THERE WAS A FLOOD NEXT DOOR TO YOUR COMPUTER ROOM DURING DESERT STORM?

WE'VE HAD FLOODING, SIR.. RENOVATIONS OF THE ENTIRE COMPLEX ARE DUE TO BEGIN NEXT YEAR.

YOU GUYS GOING TO BUY ANY MORE 400 DOLLAR TOILET SEATS?

I ONLY ASK BECAUSE I HAVE A NEPHEW WHO'S GOT A HARDWARE STORE IN CLEVELAND.

SOMEWHERE OVER CONNECTICUT
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:16 A.M.

LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING'S SLOWING PITT DOWN. UM, I'M BEING TOLD JUST ONE SOLDIER IS RESPONSIBLE.

OH, YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. THAT GUY WILL HOLD HIM RIGHT TIL THE END.

THE END OF WHAT?!

SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:21 A.M.

CAN YOU GET OUT OF THE TARGET AREA, COLONEL HARDING?

NO! I'M PINNED AND THE HYDRAULICS IN MY SUIT ARE BUSTED.

WE'LL DISPATCH A RESCUE TEAM.

NEGATIVE, THEY WOULDN'T GET PAST THE CREATURE. BESIDES, I WOULDN'T WANNA MISS THIS FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD!

THE CREATURE SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED ITS TACTICS. IT'S DUELING WITH CAPTAIN CURTIS!

I THINK THEY'RE STILL FIGHTING TO THE DEATH... BUT THERE IS SOME SORT OF CODE-OF-HONOR THING HERE...

THE WAR ROOM,
THE PENTAGON
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:29 A.M.

HOW LONG UNTIL THE SUNSPOT SATELLITE'S IN RANGE?

ACCEPTABLE FIRING RANGE IN APPROXIMATELY THIRTY MINUTES, SIR.

ACCEPTABLE?

SIR, THIS WASN'T DESIGNED FOR A MOBILE TARGET.

THE SUNSPOT DEFENSE SATELLITE
5000 FEET ABOVE THE EARTH
17 NOVEMBER 1997 5:31 A.M.

A GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA DISC JOCKEY WAS CHARGED WITH RECKLESS DRIVING AFTER OPERATING A VAN ON INTERSTATE 385 WHILE BLINDFOLDED. PARTS OF THE STUNT WERE BRAODCAST IN THIS, HIS APPARENT TRIBUTE TO BLIND SINGER RAY CHARLES.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
16 NOVEMBER 1997
9:05 A.M.

NOW BOY, HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO SHOW MY EMPLOYER I'VE COMPLETED MY TASK, WITH ALL THE GOOD TROPHY BODYPARTS AND THE PSI DAMPENING COLLAR ON *THAT* SIDE OF THE DOOR?

YOU KNOW, I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT MY CAMERA!

THEY SAY A PICTURE'S WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS... BUT THAT'S NEITHER HERE NOR THERE- I HAVE TO RETRIEVE THE COLLAR...

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO RIP THIS DOOR OFF OF IT'S HINGES, AFTER ALL.

I JUST WISH YOU COULD SEE THE MESS YOU'VE MADE OF EVERYTHING! THEN YOU'D BE REALLY SORRY!!

SIGH

SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:37 A.M.

I'VE NEVER FOUGHT ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE.

I DEFEATED HITLER'S UBERMENSCH SOLDIERS IN BERLIN. THEY THREW CARS AT ME, AND LAUGHED AT THE AMERICAN BULLETS STRIKING THEIR IRON HARD FLESH...

AND BATTLED WITH SOVIET URSUS SQUADS IN NORTH KOREA. THEY DODGED MACHINE-GUN FIRE AND RIPPED TANK ARMOR WITH THEIR BARE HANDS...

... THEY ALL EVENTUALLY FELL BEFORE ME AND THE AMERICAN KNOW-HOW THAT MADE ME WHAT I AM.

THAT HURT!

LAST TIME I BROKE ANY BONES WAS IN 1943. A MORTAR SHELL HIT MY LEFT FOOT. THREE FRACTURES. I WORE A CAST FOR A WEEK.

YOUNG BUCK WAS REALLY UPSET. HE HAD TO KEEP HIDING THE KEYS TO MY JEEP SO I WOULDN'T MAKE MY WAY TO THE FRONT AND JOIN IN THE FIGHTING.

THE REPORTER FROM STARS AND STRIPES WAS UPSET, TOO. I SUPPOSE HE WANTED MORE P.R. PHOTOS TO SEND BACK STATESIDE. HE FELT MY BEING OUT OF THE ACTION WAS HURTING THE WAR EFFORT BACK HOME.

HE KEPT CALLING ME 'AMERICA'S TRUE HERO' IN HIS COLUMN. THAT KINDA BOTHERED ME, ALTHOUGH I NEVER SAID ANYTHING TO HIM.

I WAS ONLY DOING WHAT *ANY* RED-BLOODED AMERICAN WOULD DO!

THE C.I.A.'S LATEST LATIN AMERICAN TRAINING MANUAL HAS FINALLY TAKEN A STANCE AGAINST TORTURE DURING INTERROGATION. IT NOTES, "NO VIOLENCE! IF YOU BREAK THE SUBJECT'S JAW, HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS".

THE AXIOM BUILDING, NEW YORK CITY 17 NOVEMBER 1997 5:49 A.M.

AND?...

DONE!

ACCESS GRANTED

ACCESS GRANTED

ACCESS GRANTED

IT'S ONE OF OUR OLD FRIENDS... THE THREE-BRAINED WONDER HIMSELF, THINKTANK!

HIS COMPANY, CROSSBOW TECHNOLOGIES, IS THE WEAPONS CONTRACTOR - THE ONE THAT SET THE GOVERNMENT ONTO PITT. THIS ALL STARTED WITH A RAID ON A WEAPONS DEPOT, AND THINKTANK TOLD THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT PITT DID IT.

DOWNLOAD THAT INFO ONTO SOMETHING WE CAN SHOW TO PITT. CALL SHIRO AND NV BACK, WE NEED HER HELICOPTER TO GET TO PITT BEFORE HE GETS TO WASHINGTON!

NO, WE DON'T HAVE TO CALL THEM BACK...

SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:55 A.M.
IF THAT WASN'T MY LAST SHOT WITH THIS WEAPON, I'D FEEL A LITTLE MORE
AND IF I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS THE GOOD GUY, I'D BE FEELING PRETTY LOW RIGHT NOW.
BECAUSE -
BECAUSE, EVERYONE KNOWS, THE GOOD GUYS ALWAYS WIN!

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THE WAR ROOM, THE PENTAGON
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
17 NOVEMBER 1997
5:58 A.M.

...HOW?!

HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO HIM?

NO ONE EXPECTS CAPTAIN CURTIS TO DEFEAT THE CREATURE, MISTER...

BUCHMAN, SIR.

- BUCHMAN, WE JUST NEED HIM TO KEEP THE CREATURE OCCUPIED IN THAT LOCATION FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES.

EXCUSE ME?

LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO HIM!

JACOB DOESN'T HAVE A HOPE IN HELL OF BEATING THAT THING!

JACOB?

CAPTAIN CURTIS' REAL NAME WAS JACOB KURTZMAN, SIR.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, HIT IT WITH A NUKE?

A NUCLEAR WEAPON? NO.

THE PRESIDENT IS UNWILLING TO USE A NUCLEAR DEVICE AGAINST THE CREATURE WHILE IT'S NEAR POPULATED AREAS.

WE'RE USING THE SUNSPOT DEFENSE SATELLITE. IT WAS DESIGNED TO DESTROY FORTIFIED BUNKERS, SO WE HAD TO BE A LITTLE CREATIVE. CAPTAIN CURTIS IS CARRYING A SIGNALING DEVICE SO THE TARGETING SYSTEM CAN TRACK A MOBILE TARGET.

THE SUNSPOT'S ENERGY LANCE WILL INCINERATE EVERYTHING WITHIN A ONE HUNDRED METERS RADIUS.

NO FALLOUT. NO ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE. YET ANOTHER HOLE IN THE OZONE LAYER, BUT WE CAN BLAME THAT ON CFC'S AGAIN.

WHAT ABOUT JACOB? ARE YOU GOING TO INCINERATE HIM, TOO?

HE'LL BE IN THE CENTER OF THE ENERGY BEAM. WHAT DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND ABOUT THAT?

WE'RE WAITING FOR YOUR GO-AHEAD, SIR.

WHAT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

...IS HOW YOU THINK YOU CAN GIVE THE GO-AHEAD WITH A *BULLET* BETWEEN YOUR EYES!

ARE YOU *NUTS*?!

I'VE SEEN JACOB USED AGAIN AND AGAIN BY YOU BRASS-HEARTED BASTARDS; FROM MAKING HIM PRETEND HE WASN'T A JEW, TO FREEZING HIM FOR THIRTY YEARS SO HE WOULDN'T GO TO ISRAEL!

AS A BOY AND A YOUNG MAN, I WATCHED ALL THIS HAPPEN. HE STILL BELIEVES HE'S SERVING THE BEST INTERESTS OF AMERICA BY WORK NG FOR *S.O.B.*'S LIKE YOU!

NOW, YOU'VE CONVINCED HIM TO SACRIFICE HIS LIFE SO YOU CAN KILL SOME MONSTER YOU PROBABLY GREW IN A VAT SOME-WHERE!

I'M NOT GOING TO LET THAT *HAPPEN!*

WE DIDN'T TELL HIM.

WHAT!?

WE DIDN'T TELL HIM.

THE CREATURE IS, TO SOME UNKNOWN DE-GREE, TELEPATHIC. THAT'S HOW IT'S TRACKING THE PRESIDENT.

AND IF CURTIS KNEW OUR FULL PLAN, IT COULD 'READ' H S MIND AND SCUTTLE THE WHOLE OPERATION.

AND YOUR FRIEND DIDN'T VOLUNTEER FOR THIS MISSION, HE'S FOLLOWING ORDERS- MY ORDERS!

SIR, WE'RE LOSING OUR ATTACK VECTOR...

THEN, *FIRE*, GOD-DAMN IT!

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
16 NOVEMBER 1997
9:15 A.M.

CRAP, CRAP, CRAP!

THIS IS TAKING FOREVER, KID!

I SHOULD REALLY START THINK-ING THIS STUFF THROUGH!

OH, MAN...

UH-

BLACK AXIOM

THE SUNSPOT DEFENSE SATELLITE
FEET ABOVE THE EARTH
17 NOVEMBER 1997 6:04 A.M.
LOOKING UP, HARDING THINKS OF THE CAREER-ENDING AFFAIR HE HAD WITH THE WOMAN HE DIDN'T LOVE,
AND THE EX-WIFE AND THREE KIDS HE LOVES...
HE WISHES HE COULD HAVE KISSED THEM ALL ONE LAST TIME.
KILLING THE SOLDIER WHEN THEY FIRST STARTED THIS FIGHT. HE'D MISSED FIGHTING AN HONORABLE OPPONENT SO MUCH - HE'D DRAGGED OUT THE DUEL.
LOOKING UP, CURTIS WONDERS WHY THEY DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT
AND THEN HE WONDERS NO MORE.

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SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
17 NOVEMBER 1997
6:05 A.M.

ALIENS

SOUTH OF BORING, MARYLAND
18 NOVEMBER 1997
11:45 P.M.

...STILL REFUSING TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BEAM OF LIGHT OR THE FOREST FIRE SIGHTED NEAR BORING, MARYLAND, EARLY YESTERDAY [redacted]

THIS FOOTAGE OF THE MILITARY PRESENCE AT THE LARGE CRATER WAS OBTAINED EARLIER TODAY BY A QNBC TRAFFIC HELICOPTER THAT DARED TO ENTER THE GOVERNMENT'S "NO FLY ZONE"

WE SHOWED THIS VIDEO TO NOTED ASTROPHYSICIST, ARLO BLUM. THIS IS WHAT HE HAD TO SAY...

...SURE, IT COULD BE A METEOR, BUT THERE WOULD BE MORE AIRBORNE MATERIAL AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE IMPACT WOULD HAVE MADE SEISMOMETERS AS FAR AWAY AS CALIFORNIA DO THE JITTERBUG. AND I DON'T THINK THE MILITARY WOULD BE SWARMING ALL OVER IT LIKE THIS...

IT'S A SPACESHIP, MAN! IT'S ALL OVER THE 'NET - THE GOVERNMENT SHOT DOWN A *U.F.O.*! THE ARMY WAS FIGHTING SOMETHING YESTERDAY WITH REAL HIGH-TECH STUFF AND *UNCLE SAM* SHOT DOWN *E.T.*, MAN! AN' HIS BUDDIES ARE GONNA BE TOTALLY SUPER-PISSED!!

BUT, HEY, *I'M* OKAY! I'M ON THE *MARTIAN'S* SIDE! LIVE LONG AND PROSPER, DUDE!

THE WAR ROOM, THE PENTAGON
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
18 NOVEMBER 1997
11:58 A.M.

SUNSPOT IS STILL NOT RESPONDING TO COMMANDS. I THINK WE BURNED OUT ITS PRIMARY MOTIVATOR CIRCUITS OR FUSED ITS COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY...

.. WE'VE GOT CO-OPERATION FROM TWO OF THE FOUR NETWORKS TO DOWNPLAY THE EVENT...

...OUR MEN IN BLACK ARE ALREADY SPREADING CONFLICTING STORIES AND DISTRIBUTING THE HOAX PHOTOGRAPHS...

...SADDAM SAW THE WHOLE THING ON A PIRATED SATELLITE TRANSMISSION. HE'S OFFERED FULL ACCESS TO THE *U.N.*...

...WE'RE OFFERING YELTSIN *100* MILLION IN AID IF HE'LL SAY THE COLLATERAL DAMAGE WAS CAUSED BY A RUNAWAY PIECE OF RUSSIAN SPACEJUNK...

...*HE* STILL WANTS THE TUNGUSKA DEVICE THAT THE CREATURE STOLE FROM THE NEWBURGH WEAPONS DEPOT...

SIR, THE PRESIDENT IS HERE TO SEE YOU.

ABOUT TIME!

SHOULDN'T WE REMOVE THE PRISONER?

NO, I WANT HIM TO SEE THE PRESIDENT KISSING MY ASS FOR 'SACRIFICING' THAT OLD WORLD WAR TWO POPSICLE FRIEND OF HIS.

MR. PRESIDENT!

GENERAL BLAGG.

GENERAL, HAVE YOU FOUND ANY OF THE CREATURE'S REMAINS?

NO, SIR, WE PROBABLY WON'T FIND ANY TRACE OF IT. I BELIEVE IT WAS INCINERATED BY THE ENERGY LANCE.

WELL, I HOPE SO. IT'S JUST...

IT'S JUST THAT I STILL FEEL LIKE I'M BEING HUNTED. LIKE ITS PSYCHIC LINK WITH ME IS STILL THERE.

SIR!

IT CAN WAIT.

SIR, NO, IT CAN'T. IT'S THE CREATURE...

IT'S STILL ALIVE!

HA! HA-HA HAHG-KOFFHA!

HA-HA-HAHG-HAH!

SO, GENERAL, DO YOU STILL THINK THE PRESIDENT'S GONNA KISS YOUR ASS?

WHO'S HE?

HE WAS CAPTAIN CURTIS' FRIEND, MR. PRESIDENT.

HE'S A PRISONER, MR. PRESIDENT. HE SHOT ME!

THEN WHAT'S HE STILL DOING HERE?

MR. PRESIDENT, WE SHOULD GET YOU TO AIR FORCE ONE.

I'M SORRY ABOUT CAPTAIN CURTIS, I FEEL YOUR PAIN.

HEH, IF YOU WANT TO FEEL MY PAIN, YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME OF BLAGG'S MEN WORK YOU OVER A BIT.

MR. PRESIDENT, PLEASE.

HAVE YOU TRIED TALKING TO IT?

WHAT?

NO, OF COURSE NOT! IT WAS COMING TO KILL ME!

YOU HAVE NOTHING THAT CAN STOP IT. YOUR BODYGUARD WANTS YOU TO RUN AWAY. WHAT KIND OF PRES DENT ARE YOU TO SACRIFICE SO MANY AMERICAN LIVES AND THEN RUN LIKE A COWARD.

DON'T YOU THINK YOU OWE IT TO ALL THE SOLDIERS THAT DIED FIGHTING THAT THING? DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD TRY SOMETHING ELSE OTHER THAN THROWING MORE YOUNG AMERICANS IN ITS WAY TO BE KILLED?

MR. PRESIDENT, THE CREATURE IS LESS THAN A FEW HOURS AWAY! WE HAVE TO GET YOU TO THE PLANE!

WASHINGTON, D.C.
18 NOVEMBER 1997
1:32 P.M.

YOU - YOU'VE COME TO KILL ME, HAVEN'T YOU?

YES!

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MY GOD, HE KILLED HIM!

WE GOTTA GET HIM ON BOARD BEFORE THEY CAN RETALIATE!

PITT, HURRY, GET IN! THEY'LL BE ATTACKING SOON, AND THIS TIME THEY WON'T HOLD BACK FROM USING NUCLEAR WEAPONS!

THEY WILL NOT ATTACK! I AM THEIR LEADER NOW!

WHAT?!

I KILLED THEIR PATHETIC RULER, AND BY RIGHT OF COMBAT, I AM NOW IN COMMAND OF THIS WORLD!

IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY HERE! GET IN!

I THINK HE BOUGHT IT.

I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, MR. PRESIDENT.

UNFORTUNATE.

BLAM

...ESIDENT CLINTON IS DEAD. THIS WAS CONFIRMED AT 2:43 P.M., EASTERN STANDARD TIME. THE INITIAL REPORT IS THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS MURDERED ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN BY AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL CREATURE.

CITY

POLICE IN DENVER, COLORADO ARRESTED A MAN FOR BREAKING INTO THE CITY MORGUE AND PAINTING THE TOENAILS OF THE CORPSES. THE MAN EXPLAINED HE WAS TRYING TO GET EXPERIENCE SO HE COULD APPLY FOR A JOB IN A BEAUTY SALON.

BOB'S STEREO

THIS CREATURE IS BELIEVED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TWO HUNDRED YARD CRATER BURNED INTO THE GROUND NEAR BORING, MARYLAND EARLY YESTERDAY MORNING.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AS SOON AS IT IS DEEMED SAFE FOR HIM TO DO SO. IT IS ASSUMED HE HAS ALREADY BEEN SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT, BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION ON THAT AS OF YET.

THE MILITARY HAS YET TO RELEASE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT THE CREATURE LOOKS LIKE, OR WHERE IT MAY CURRENTLY BE LOCATED.

I CAN FIND HIM.